DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 051 972 RE 003 636

AUTHOR Werneken, Jane
TITLE Utilizing Television in Reading Improvement Courses.
PUB DATE 21 Apr 71
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the meeting of the International Reading Association, Atlantic City, N.J., Apr. 19-23, 1971

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Reading Programs, Experimental Programs, Multimedia Instruction, *Reading Improvement, *Reading Instruction, Reading Skills, Remedial Reading Programs, *Televised Instruction, *Television Research

ABSTRACT

Because televisions are found in many homes today, they can be used as a channel for bringing reading improvement courses to a large number of people. Various experimental television reading programs are summarized which have proven successful in motivating people to improve their reading skills. Through Glendale Community College in Arizona, a weekly 28-minute reading improvement course was offered over commercial television. Enrolled students came on campus for administration of the Iowa Silent Reading Test prior to the first session of the course. Test results, along with reading materials kits with practice exercises, were mailed to each student. Each weekly lesson consisted of three parts: class instruction, including a review of the preceding lesson; guests; and the use of filmstrips with the Tach X. It was found that careful planning of each lesson was needed to make the best use of the limited time schedule. Many typical classroom materials were used successfully on the programs, such as films and the overhead projector. At the end of the course, the Iowa Silent Reading Test was again administered on campus. Comparison of the pretest and post-test results indicated that students became involved in their work and improved their reading techniques. References are included. (VJ)

ED051972

JANE WERNEKEN
READING INSTRUCTOR
GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
6000 WEST OLIVE AVENUE
GLENDALE, ARIZONA 85301

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

UTILIZING TELEVISION IN READING IMPROVEMENT COURSES

WEDNESDAY APRIL 21, 1971

Television is an excellent media through which we can bring reading improvement courses to a large number of people who are unable to attend college or any other school in person, but who are really eager to improve their reading skills. Reading needs to be considered as a continuum, an on-going process of learning improved techniques and enriching fund of knowledge, so that we may continually update ourselves in the world of work and the world around us.

RE003 636

Some people in the reading field may consider television reading courses as a threat to first-hand teaching. These people fail to realize that television with its popular acceptance provides the opening wedge, the initial motivation to bring about a greater interest in reading at all age levels. Because of brief segments of alloted time to television teaching, the viewer receives stimulation of ideas but finds that to thoroughly understand the issues or subjects, he will need to read about them in depth. Television exposes all types of viewers to a capsule perspective of the world, but understanding is not implicit in that picture. The television reading course should not presume to solve all problems in reading, but should serve as a catalist agent in motivating people to seek further ways to improve their reading skills. The classroom and television instruction compliment and supplement a one another instead of being competitive or duplicative.

The Continuing Education Division of Glendale Community College investigated the need for television instruction and decided to put a Reading Improvement Course on color television once a week for twenty-eight minutes on a regular commercial Channel, KTVK, Channel 3, Phoenix, Arizona, an ABC network station. This course was offered as a public service presentation by KTVK so that it did not cost the college anything but the instructor's pay in teaching the course. You might be interested to know that the Federal Communications Commission requires that commercial television stations, "reserve one tenth of the available broadcast time for non-commercial programming. This presents American education with unprecedented challenge."[1]

[1] John Walker Powell, "Channels of Learning", Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C. 1962 (p. 28)

The only Adult Reading Improvement course in Arizona had been attempted for only one semester prior to my course on broadcast television. The first course had difficulty because of the use of the E.D.L. Controlled Reader. Since speed is an individual response, the providing of a story at a particular rate for all readers did not adhere to good reading principle.

In initiating a new course, I realized the responsibility for having students communicate their understandings and problems to me. Consequently, I devised the weekly outline homework from their text, Successful Reading Key to Our Dynamic Society, together with individual conferences as tie-in communication techniques.

Students enrolled in our television course came to the college to take a group diagnostic test, the Iowa Silent Reading Test. The test results and a Reading Materials Kit with practice materials are sent to each student so that he will become acquainted with his strengths and weaknesses, in terms of: speed, comprehension, scanning, skimming, improving fund of knowledge, concentration and retention. These are mailed by the students, checked and recorded by the instructor, and returned by mail.[4] The prompt return of the outlines helps advise the students of their growth in organizing their understandings of their reading, and also tends to motivate them to persist in improving their reading techniques for the sake of better understanding and more enjoyment through the reading process.

Reading goals stressed in our course were:

To have a purpose in doing any kind of reading: information, leisure or enrichment.

To develop a more curious mind.

To Build and enrich vocabulary.

To become involved in what we read.

To regulate reading speed according to the difficulty of the material.

To read in thought units - read for ideas.

To read with minds and eyes.

Learning to skim and scan.

Taking effective notes to help memory

Establishing good study habits.

Learning techniques for finding the main idea.

Using a framework around which to organize the main ideas.

To enjoy time alone through reading.

To expose to a variety of new experiences in order to enlarge fund of knowledge and make reading more readily understandable.

To arrange a healthy reading environment.

To comprehend and retain what is read.

Learning to use a variety of materials in the reference library.

Learning to use the author's ideas as a springboard for one's own creative ideas.

Learning to separate facts from emotion.

To respect reading as a process demanding constant practice with improved techniques.

To keep up with the world around us in terms of our work, and leisure.

Vocabulary and outlining were especially stressed in the course. Through outlining the student learns to organize the thoughts of the writer, seeing the relationship of the parts to the whole. In every session, vocabulary, in context from the textbook selections, was listed visually for the viewers and pronounced. Each lesson was divided into three parts:

1. Class instruction
2. Guests
3. Use of the Tach X

Early sessions stimulated registration, advised students regarding course requirements and materials needed. Since reading improvement courses had not been given in Arizona on television, it was considered advisable to broadcast three sample sessions before the official start of the course. I found that single instructor presentation via lecture method of a course very dull. Because of this realization, I decided to seek resource people for my series who would supplement the concepts I was emphasizing in the reading course. It was necessary to contact all of these resource people a month prior to the beginning of the course, and to have each of the 16 week segments of the series planned in advance. The Program Manager of Channel 3 asked for the course description and outline two weeks prior to the opening of the reading series. This was not just a demand made by Channel 3, but was a regulation of the Inter-State Communications Commission because they must examine the planning for all shows going on the air well in advance.

Resource people were interviewed in the program in order to emphasize important areas of the course. Typical guests on the program were: Max Norman, author of the text, Successful Reading, Key to Our Dynamic Society, did a book walk-through and told of his purposes in writing the book.

The Editor of the Editorial page of our largest local newpaper, the Arizona Republic, emphasized the importance of distinguishing between fact and emotion. A student from our college newspaper staff appeared with Fritz Marchquart. The student questioned him regarding the make up of an editorial page.

A head of a local Reading Department made a demonstration of an Eye Movement Camara, showing transparancies of eye patterns and eye-span of children from first to the twelfth grades.

An engineer from Motorola who stressed the importance of rapid reading with good comprehension as essential to success in the business world, also emphasized the constant need for engineers to update their knowledge by reading the latest research.

A college librarian acquainted the students with the range of library materials available to them in every library, especially in the Reference Section. She called to their attention the many references available to fill in areas of knowledge in work in which they were having difficulty. Few people consult the Children's Catalogue, Junior High School Catalogue, or High School Catalogue which are index books that take concepts of a wide subject variety back to their simplest beginnings without vocabulary barriers.

Three guests on one program were, Director of the Phoenix Little Theater, Phoenix Art Museum and the Director of the Arizona Commission of Humanities.

They told how reading helped people to appreciate, understand and participate in the fine arts.

Near the end of the course a Sophistication Quiz was given; names of well-known people throughout the world were put on the visual screen and the students were asked to match the professions with the names and send this quiz in as an assignment. Such an activity showed the importance of keeping up with current events.

Students were particularly grateful for the fact that each television session began with three to four minutes' summary of the preceding session, thus reeforcing the ideas presented and establishing continuity.

When the course was completed the Iowa Silent Reading test was once more administered at the college Reading Lab and results were compared with the pre-test. (see appendix)

These scores indicate that the students really became involved in the work of the television course and actually learned to improve their techniques.

It may be a surprise to the classroom teachers that the equipment and material used in the regular remedial reading program can be used on television most satisfactorily. The more extensively such tools are used the better one exploits the television medium.

Some classroom materials used by the television station are:

Slide films
16 mm films
Films strips used with the Tach X
Overhead Projector
Reference Library Materials

Television can improve instruction because the teacher needs to plan each part of the presentation effectively to the very last second in timing and interpretation. The instructor usually finds that he can cover more material in a television lesson than one in the classroom because of this split-second preparation and because of no interruptions. If students have questions they are advised to write them down and send them in or come to the instructor's office for a conference.

In television teaching the teacher is assisted by eleven technical people- a technical director to whom she gives her weekly minute by minute timing, the names of the participants, special information that the instructor wishes presented visually; cameramen, and other production personnel who serve as monitors and give time signals for the course. A teacher must learn to write her script for each class session, planning the visual announcements, names below the pictures of panel members, slides, movies or charts that are to be used and their positioning for effective use. In addition, she must plan the time for each class session, dividing the presentation into such time segments as, class assignment, summary of preceding lesson, vocabulary pronunciation and visual listings, technique motivation, panel or discussion with students regarding the uses of the reading techniques in their other college courses, and finally an introduction and motivation for the next week's lesson.

The types of the instructors preparation for television which I have just described indicates a need for time and extreme detailed careful planning. Such work is handicapped if administors assign a television course to an instructor as an additional load to her regular daily load.

in Continuing Education without giving released time. It is important that all administrators should consider television as such a valuable tool in the learning process that it be given the same prestige as any of the day time courses. The instructor must be able to project well as a representative of the college and spend longer hours than for day courses in terms of preparing the most dramatic, effective presentations. The playing back of the tape recordings made of each one of the class sessions needs constant study to provide the instructor with good self-analysis. The Audio-Visual Departments of colleges need to give better supportive publicity, because the instructor does not have time for this. Most of the research in the field also indicates that colleges throughout the country doing television work need better publicity backup.

To give a broader perspective regarding Educational Courses through television, I will quote the following research:

The Ford Foundation is sponsoring a great deal of research in terms of using television as a medium for education. The Ford Foundation Fund for Advancement of Education Report, tells us in Teaching by Television that the Ford Foundation has provided financial support amounting to $20 million for a variety of experiments at school, and college level involving the use of television as a medium of instruction. The results of experimentation to date have been very encouraging. These results show, students at both school and college learn as much, in cases significantly more, from televised instruction as from conventional instruction. The research findings from most of the

experiments have been that there is no significant difference in achievement between students in television classes and comparable students in regular classes.

The results of two years of testing in the National Program in Washington County, Maryland showed a comparison between students taking television as compared to those taking conventional courses. Of the 251 comparisons made in two years: 165 favored television students; 86 conventionally taught.

Significant achievement by students: 69 favored television; 21 conventional.

As teachers become more familiar with television as a medium much of the opposition evaporates. Television, far from being a threat to the status and prestige of the classroom teacher, is actually a powerful new tool for enhancing the art and prestige of teaching and for bringing to the student richer, deeper and broader learning experiences.

New York University started Sunrise Semester in 1957 on WCBS-TV with 177 students their first term for credit and by the fourth year, 150,000.

The students' responses to television were:

78% thought that use of television was "very good" or"fairly good" in teaching classes of large enrollment.

Students ranked television first over conventional instruction in classes of 200 taught by the same instructor or classes of 45 taught by graduate assistants.

In addition to the Ford Foundation findings regarding students response to television instruction a Survey of Viewers of College Courses Over Television, made by the State University of New York, Albany, stated that

viewers found the courses, Astronomy, Latin America I and II, given in the Fall of 1966 interesting, satisfactory and on a par with or better than classroom instruction. Most viewers were aged thirty or over. Students made up 40% of the viewers. They favored weekday evenings for viewing time. Courses in the future should be given more publicity.

As an example of a course which was given helpful publicity, Robert Luke tells of Operation Alphabet, a television course for illiterates given by the Philadelphia Public School System. School Extension Services and Station WFIL combined to work out a series of one hundred lessons proposing to teach primary reading and writing skills to Philadelphia illiterates. Grants from the Annisbury Foundation at the University of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company made it possible for this series to be taped and offered free to other stations. A home study book accompanies the one hundred lessons; it takes twenty weeks to complete the course. Over a three year period 50,000 to 70,000 adults took the course in Philadelphia and about one hundred cities used the course during 1965-66.

In addition, to Robert Luke's article, I found further information through ERIC CRIER Educational Research on microfilm regarding the course for illiterates, Operation Alphabet. The Columbia University Teachers' College Study, says that this study aimed to establish standards of excellence for television of literacy programs, to describe planning, production and broadcast of one series, Operation Alphabet, to measure performance against standards. A series of one hundred, half an hour

programs was aimed at achieving third grade reading level. It was made available to television stations throughout the country in 1961. In 1962 NAPSAE was given copyright and booking rights. In New York City it was given over three stations (commercial, education, and high school) three times a day. Individual tests were created by the State Department of Education and distributed by branch libraries; certificates of competence were offered. Publicity, recruitment, and non use of leaders of sub culture were the series' shortcomings.

The outcome of a Washington County, Maryland Survey of 1960 indicated by Schram, Wilbur and Lang in their book, The Impact of Educational Television indicated that most teachers felt more learning takes place with the use of television. Reading showed an increased improvement in classes in both city and rural areas. The strengths cited for television teaching were:

1. Opportunity to reach larger numbers of students
2. Use of close-up picture brings intimacy to instruction
3. The medium holds attention
4. The student feels the individual attention directed by the instructor

Television has been called the "boob-tube", but it can be for every individual what he wants it to be--a learning tool, a leisure pleasure.

Superior teachers can be selected for instructional television courses providing the system and outside viewers at large, the cream of their professional talents. Being freed from a part of their traditional classroom load, those teachers are then able to concentrate their talents

upon the perfecting of their art, says Costello and Gordan in their book Teaching with Television.

Henry R. Cassirer, in Television Teaching Today, states that television will not cure the teacher shortage, nor will it make any less urgent the need for increased facilities of every kind. In all probability, the medium will not save money, as many of its most vocal advocates have proclaimed. But it can improve instruction. When a lesson is prepared for television it can be edited thereby removing the poor area and giving students better lessons.

I am sure that all of us at this conference have discovered many times over that the general public is astounded to find reading is being taught at college level. Most people believe that learning to read is completed by the fourth grade. It is the responsibility of all of us in the reading field to correct this prevalent misunderstanding. Since television sets are to be found in virtually every American home regardless of economic or educational status, what better medium is there to promote the value of acquiring reading skills at adult level which so greatly enhance the individual's growth and development in an ever changing world of ideas? Life can be more interesting, colorful, and challenging if we consider that in becoming a better reader, education emerges as an ever-rewarding- life-long process.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1- Brown, Robert, Survey of Viewers of College Courses Over Television. State University of New York, Albany, N.Y. -Instructional Resource Center. April, 1967

2-Cassier, Henry, Television Teaching Today. United Nations'Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. 1960. pp113-115.

3- Columbia University, The Role of Television in Reaching Illiterate Adults With a Literacy Program Series. (Teacher's College Study) Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 1969, ERIC Feb. 1971

4-Costello & Gordon, Teach With Television. University of Illinois Press Urbana, Illinois. pp25-26

5-Ford Foundation, Teaching By Television. Fund for Advancement of Education Report, New York. N.Y. January 1961. pp941-947. ERIC Jan. 1961

6-Luke, Robert, Operation Alphabet. Wilson Library Bulletin . 40:54-56, Sept. 1967.

7-Powell, John Walker, Channels of Learning. Public Affairs Press, Washington,D.C. 1962. p28

8-Shram, Wlbur & Lang, The Impact of Educational Television. Hastings House Publishers. New York. 1961.p 25.

9-Time Magazine, James Brown's TV Series Efficient Reading , 90:50, Oct. 2, 1967